



VMFA(AW)-224 Suicide Prevention Policy

The health and welfare of every Marine, Sailor, civilian Marine, and family member is of paramount importance. Suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem. DO NOT KILL YOURSELF! There is no personal challenge or setback that we cannot face more effectively together.

Be the most ready when the nation is least ready: If you are feeling depressed or hopeless, it is your duty to ask for help. There is no shame in it. I expect you to do it. Talk to someone immediately! Don't do our adversaries' work for them.

Brilliance in the basics: Know where you can get help:

- Your family and friends
- Chain of Command
- Chaplain
- Flight Surgeon
- Marine Corps Community Services, MCAS Beaufort Behavioral Health Branch (843-228-6126)
- Military OneSource (800-273-8255)
- DStressline (877-476-7734)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800-273-8255)
- Emergency (911)

Take care of each other: If you suspect someone is thinking about hurting himself or herself, it is your responsibility to help. Do it now!

- **Recognize distress**
 - Note changes in personality, emotions, or behavior
 - Note withdrawal from co-workers, friends and family
 - Note changes in eating and sleeping patterns
- **Ask**
 - Calmly question about the distress you observed
 - If necessary, ask the question directly: "Are you thinking about killing yourself?"
- **Care**
 - Actively listen; don't judge
 - Peacefully control the situation; do not use force; keep everyone safe
- **Escort**
 - Never leave your buddy alone
 - Escort to chain of command, chaplain, medical, or behavioral health professional

Keep our Honor Clean: Bengals taking care of Bengals and Bengal families; this is what we do, no exceptions.

Semper Fidelis,

M. P. SHAND,
Commanding Officer, VMFA(AW)-224

30 October 2014